



the RARA RAG

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ROCHESTER AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, INC.

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NO. 6

Aeromodlers

Marykay Vesco, KC2DPG

Aeromodling is our topic for the February 1, 2002 meeting. Four guests whom are members of the Genesee Valley Aeromodlers club will be demonstrating radio controlled airplanes. Glenn Crocker, Charlie Vogel, Eric Higham, and John Ward will be presenting the program. They will have three or four small radio controlled airplanes that can fly indoors for a demonstration as well as radio equipment. So get ready for a really exciting program.

Don't forget the meeting will be held at 8 PM at the Henrietta Fire Hall, 3129 E Henrietta Road. Everyone is invited to bring a guest, whether or not they are a ham!!

Also, before and after the meeting we will have a TV w/VCR available for members to view the taping of the Marconi Day Special Event. There will also be refreshments after the meeting.

RARA Meeting

February 1, 2002

8:00 PM

Henrietta Fire Hall,
3129 E. Henrietta Rd.

Aeromodling

Presented by

Glenn Crocker, Charlie Vogel,
Eric Higham, and John Ward

Of The
Genesee Valley Aeromodlers

Amateur Radio

More Than A Hobby

Peter Fournia, W2SKY

Amateur radio activists are rediscovering the educational and vocational value of their hobby. Rejuvenated by younger and more proactive hams the hobby has been catching up with the mind-numbing explosion in telecommunications.

Many professionals in communications and technology have worked into their career with help from amateur radio. For example, a survey was taken at a recent Xerox Amateur Radio Club meeting where 80% said the hobby influenced their educational path and success with their careers. Most were introduced to the hobby in their teen years, many as boy scouts.

The hobby continues to bring modern telecommunications technologies within reach of the hobbyist. Today's amateur radio operators use computers to log contacts, send digital messages, control equipment, track amateur satellites, interface radios on the Internet and even simulate performance of communication systems. Of course hams still specialize in emergency communications and enjoy the challenges of armchair chats using their radio over using the Internet.

The educational value of the hobby is important to a group of 15 hams called Radio Coaches. They have been volunteering at two Rochester middle schools over the past 3 years. This is a 10-session program for 6th graders. The Radio Coaches enlighten the students with interactive demonstrations involving language arts, geography, science and math. Other volunteers participate at the Rochester Museum and Science Center and with area Boy Scout troops.

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The Prez Says

Peter Fournia, W2SKY

Interactive amateur radio exhibits were on display at Rochester Museum and Science Center's Holiday Science and Technology Fair in late December. Many hundreds of people saw the exhibit and enjoyed the HF station and hands-on displays. This is the 5th consecutive year that ham radio has been present. About 25 different hams from RARA and Rochester DX Association helped with the show. It is very enjoyable for everyone involved. The K2RDX station made 114 QSO's with 28 different countries. Local repeaters were also used in demonstrations and coordination of volunteers. See pictures of the exhibit and smiles on our audience faces in the "current events" section of the RARA website.

All area hams share a little pride when our own Rochester VHF Group takes top national honors in the January VHF contest. This happens when the full Rochester ham community gets very radioactive on that weekend. The contest is now complete but the scoring is not. Let's help with the scoring and maybe win the Rochester Cup along the way. We ask that those who participated fill out a simple log sheet with summary report and file them with the ARRL and with our local RVHF group. Please list RARA as your club. Forms and simple instructions are on the "current events" part of our web site.

Our Rochester Hamfest Chairman, Harold Smith, K2HC has addressed some interesting changes to this years event to be held May 31st, June 1st, and 2nd. The "Bring and Buy" concept was covered in last month's RAG. Also new is an expanded use of the dome arena. Most hams have hobbies and commercial interests that go beyond ham radio. These may be of interest to other hams so Harold wants your suggestions for these additional exhibitors. This will help with Hamfest overhead expenses and enrich the Hamfest with a diverse selection of interests that surround the hobby. Check out the Hamfest website at www.rochesterhamfest.org. You are encouraged to message Harold at the website with ideas lead-

(Continued on page 3)

Evolve Or Die The Secretary's Survey

Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY

This will be a more-or-less regular column in the *RARA RAG*, asking for your input on some very serious issues facing RARA, and Amateur Radio in general. I have lots of questions! I know it seems that everyone has surveys these days but they do serve a purpose. I will route issues to the responsible RARA Club Officer or Committee. Every answer is important and you will learn of the impact by the way the club evolves. The following is the first set of survey questions:

What were the best, and worst, RARA activities, in the past year?

What services to members would you like to see RARA implement?

What services that RARA provides are the most important to you?

How often do you refer to the published RARA Amateur Directory?

What attracts you to RARA events?

Do you want to receive club bulletins and notifications via e-mail or the club e-mail reflector?

Please respond, as your comments are very important to RARA and its future. The best way is to leave a voice message at (585) 987-3680 after 5 PM. The next best way is an e-mail to wb2sxy@arrl.net. Let me know if you would like a personal reply; I will need a way to get back to you. Venting or grumbling is OK too! All replies are strictly confidential. E-mail addresses are for RARA use only.

Thanks for your input.

The Prez Says — *(Continued from page 2)*

ing to additional exhibitors.

Lastly, please let your friends know that our next amateur radio license course starts February 11th. Several Board Of Directors members will be promoting this. Amateur radio is more than a hobby. It is an exciting stepping-stone into a diverse communications experience.

Flea Market Manager Needed

Harold Smith, K2HC

The reason most people come to the Rochester Hamfest is to visit the flea market. The flea market is comprised of over 1,000 vendors. Most are selling from the trunk or tailgate of their cars or trucks. Some are professional fleamarketeters.

The Hamfest needs a manager to see that the flea market is set up and operated in an orderly manner. The professionals usually arrive well before the Hamfest opens for business. These people stake out their spot before we have had an opportunity to organize the parking setup. The flea market manager's principal task is to get these people situated in a manner, which makes an orderly arrangement.

Although we do not "own" the grounds until the Hamfest opens on Friday, the manager and/or his staff needs to visit the grounds prior to our official opening to get those on site parked in the proper locations.

The manager needs to work with flea market operators who call or write in advance asking for a particular space. The manager also needs to recruit a staff to work the flea market when the Hamfest is in operation.

This position is vital to keeping the Rochester Hamfest the success that it is. Interested? Call Harold Smith, K2HC, General Chairman at (585) 424-7184 during business hours.

RARA HOTLINE 442-0587

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My Most Memorable QSO

Jack Tripp, W2JAT

My most memorable QSO occurred at a Boy Scout meeting about two years ago. John Woika, W8JW, asked me to help him put on a demonstration of amateur radio to a Boy Scout Troop in Brighton. We set up an HF station and ran the coax out a window to an antenna on John's van.

At the beginning of the meeting, John and I talked about amateur radio and all the fun you could have with it and all the different countries and people you could talk to. One of the questions asked was how could we talk to people in foreign countries if we did not speak their language. We told them that most of the people we talked to spoke very good English, at least better English than we could speak their language.

The boys then went and had their patrol meetings and what ever else they do. During this time I was spinning the dial on 20 meters and heard a CQ from Eugene Gnilitsa, UR3IDD, on a ship in the Mediterranean Sea. It turns out his home was in the Ukraine and he was a crewmember on a ship that was at that time near the island of Sardinia. I told him we were at a Boy Scout meeting and was he going to be around for a little while. He said yes, so I told him when the boys came back to us I would give him a call.

The boys came back into the room we were in and we told them we had a surprise for them. I gave Eugene a call and he came back right away. We had a great QSO and he told the boys all about himself, where his home was, what his job was, etc. I've never seen a room full of teenagers so quiet and wide-eyed in my life. It was GREAT. It certainly answered their question about language barriers, there aren't any.

So that's the story of my most memorable QSO. I hope others of you out there have a story to tell and send it in to Lloyd to put in the *RARA RAG*.

ATTENTION: Would the person that purchased a TEAC reel to reel tape recorder at the auction in November please contact Jerry Svoboda, KB2QIU at 442-8386. Jerry has a rubber reel retainer that goes with this unit.

RARA RAG 20 Years Ago, February 1982

Ed Gable, K2MP

This is a first, I think.... NO meeting announcement. Just that the program Chairman promises a good meeting and you should be at the Eisenhart Auditorium at 8:00 PM. Could it be something in the water supply? Reading further reveals that RARRA President Ray Pickens, WA2MYG, as well as RDXA Chairman Rick Berg, KS2F, report that they, too, have no meeting program in time for publishing. It was reported that RARA President Don Drennan, W2EBF, was out of the Hospital and recovering at home. *RAG* Editor Ron Jakubowski, K2RJ, announced that Frank Pollino, K2OS, has been appointed to the position of Advertising Manager. Ed Holdsworth, N2EH, wrote describing the great and successful effort of moving the K2JD Club station to 111 Westfall Road. Unique was the ability to move the large TH6DXX HF Yagi to the new location without dismantling it. How? Just carry it down the middle of Westfall Road! It took 25 volunteers to make the weekend move. A new monthly column started with this issue entitled *The Cops Column* and written by Howie Davies, N2CUN. Harold Smith, K2HC, and Rich McCracken, KA2CVN, co-wrote an article describing the attempt to write and introduce a Bill to eliminate Sales Tax on Amateur Radio equipment. RARA successfully wrote such a Bill and it was introduced and sponsored by NYS Assemblyman Roger Robach. It failed! Gary Perkins, WB2MDC, a licensed private pilot, wrote a small article trying to drum up interest in a club for flying hams. Pete Secrist, WB2SUN, was announced as the contact for the upcoming February RARA Valentine Dinner Dance. The venue was Barry's Party house with the Peter Matina Orchestra entertaining. In the Silent Keys department it was sadly reported that Al Mumby, WB2MCP, passed away of a heart attack. Al was a past RARA President and was very active in VHF/UHF activity and volunteered for an endless amount of committees and activities. If it was happening in Rochester ham radio circles, Al was there. From the Want Ads you could buy a Tempo S1 Hand Held 2 meter rig from John Golden, W2IRG.

Recycle Your QST!

Peter Fournia, W2SKY

Jim Wenskus, K2BEH, suggested this idea for spreading the word about ham radio. Jim suggests that you leave your pre enjoyed QST issues in waiting rooms that you visit! You know, at the barbershop, doctor's office, hospital lounge, bank branch, town library, etc. You can enrich and inform many other people by this simple gift. Jim further suggested that you put a message on a label and stick it over the existing QST mailing label. A suggested message is:

"Amateur Radio is more than an exciting hobby. It is a stepping-stone to careers in the telecommunication industries. More information at (585) 442-0587 or www.ggw.org/rara"

This can enlighten people about the broad scope of our hobby and likely excite a small number of people. Inquires to the RARA hot line will tell us how well this works.

Hamfest Programs

Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

The Rochester Hamfest is only four months away, May 31st, June 1st and 2nd being the dates. I hope that everyone is ready for this exciting event. As in past years the Hamfest is, also, the Atlantic Division/ARRL Convention. Rochester has been one of the larger Hamfests in the country, drawing thousands of visitors each year. During the course of the Hamfest there are many different programs and activities for all of us to attend. Many are for learning something new, increasing your capabilities, trying to improve a skill, and others for staying up to date in areas of interest. Over the course of the next four months a few of these programs will be reviewed briefly in the *RAG* so that you will know what is going to take place. The May issue will have the complete schedule, listing the times and rooms that the programs will be in so that everyone can schedule their time accordingly. So here we go with the first few program overviews.

VE Testing:

If you want to upgrade your license to a higher class or know some one who wants to take the exam to get their license, this is the place to come. The RARA VE team will be on hand to help make this happen. The team is led by George Plattater, AA2FO and will be giving all exams on the Fair Grounds both Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. For further information or to make an appointment for an exam, contact George as time gets closer. His phone number and e-mail address can be found on page 2.

Computer Aided Antenna Design:

Ever wanted to play around with different antennas for different bands? Want to try building your own antenna and design or improve the performance of one that you have? Ed Hare, W1RFI, ARRL Lab. Supervisor will be on hand to show you how. Ed will help you learn how to use one of the computer aided design programs and make it work for you. It is not as difficult as you may think and as you start building your antennas you will see how

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Historical Bits

Ed Gable, K2MP

- 1928— Ham callsign prefix changed from "U" (USA) to the W/K we use today
- 1941 — Amateur Operations suspended due to war. WERS (War Emergency Radio Service) authorized at 2 ½ meters.
- 1961 — FM Stereo authorized by FCC.

Lloyd R. Caves, WB2EFU

Did you know that ten years ago RARA was one of the largest clubs on the East Coast with over 1000 members and was one of the largest in the country? Did you know that we now have only around 500 members? That is a 50% drop in 10 years or less. Now we all know that the average age of the Ham community is getting older which means the odds of more silent keys is higher, but lets hope it is no where near that high. Where are members going and what are they doing now? If you are friends with someone who was, but no longer is a member ask them why and find out what caused them to leave the club. This is a trend that needs to be turned around fast. By the way RARA is not the only club feeling this reduction, they all are.

One of the best ways to reverse this trend is to let the club officers know what it is you would like to see the club do for you. If what you want is what others want, have the officers make it happen. Elsewhere in this issue is the first of a series of surveys that your secretary is conducting. He is doing so because the Board Of Directors wants to start doing things for the members and not just stay status quo. Take the time to answer the question and give your input. Talk up what you would like to see new, changed, or a return to something that has just gone away. Help RARA turn around the declining membership numbers by having RARA give you what you want out of your club. This club has been working hard with the youth in the area to learn about amateur radio. But in doing so has it forgotten about you, our current member? We hope not but by answering the survey you can tell us.

Another thing you can do to improve the organization is to get involved. Come out to the meeting once a month and have some fun. Talk with others and enjoy yourself. Another thing you can do is get involved in club functions, activities, and organization. The election of officers is only three months away. Have you ever thought about running for an office? Be a part of the change and help make it happen; it is important to all of us.

There are around 3500 amateurs in the Rochester and surrounding area. This number hasn't changed much over the past ten years so

having 1/3 of them as members shouldn't be difficult. New members or ex members returning to our ranks are equally important. Let your friends know that we want them back and we will fulfill their needs.

Amateur Radio More Than A Hobby

(Continued from page 1)

An effective and enjoyable path into radio communications is provided by the amateur radio hobby. This means obtaining an amateur radio license. There are several opportunities for training provided by the Rochester Amateur Radio Association and surrounding clubs. The next training course starts February 11th at the Monroe County Social Services building at 111 Westfall Rd. This is a 12-week program that focuses on passing the amateur radio license test. The fee is \$26. More information is available at (585) 442-0587 or on line at www.ggw.org/rara.

Hamfest Programs — *(Continued from page 5)*

much fun it is to be on the air with something that you designed and built that works as well or better than anything available commercially.

Atlantic Division Affiliated Club Conference:

This years Affiliated Club Conference will be lead by Bill Edger, N3LLR, Atlantic Division Vice-Director. If you are associated with other clubs in the Atlantic Division you should contact the officers of that club and encourage them to have people attend this meeting. The purpose is to see what each other is doing, why, and how. Each club can have their own fields of interest and expertise but find out how it fits into the whole scheme of things with the League and other groups. Can you learn to do it better or help another group learn a way to improve their performance? Are there groups that are doing things that will increase club memberships, including the ARRL and how can we learn from it? Keith Freeberg, N2BEL who is the head of the Youth Leadership Committee for the Rochester Amateur Radio Asso-

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Hamfest Programs — (Continued from page 6)

ciation will start this program off with a short presentation on what he and his group are doing in the Radio Coaches Program at local schools as well as his venture with the Scouts in the area. This is a program that is a step in the directions that the ARRL is going with its "Big Project."

Western New York Section Meeting:

Scott Bauer, W2LC, Western New York Section Manager will be in Rochester to see and talk to as many people as he can. Each year he holds his section meeting for all his appointees on what is taking place in the ARRL and Western New York and brings them up to speed on things. It is a meeting of two-way communications though so that the appointees can let him know what is taking place in their field. This does not mean that you have to hold an appointed position to attend. It is a good place to give your input back to the Western New York leadership on things that you would like to see changed or improved. It is also, a good place to let it be known that you would be interested in an appointment and the area of interest.

That is all on the programs for this month. However, there are a couple of other things about the Hamfest that need to be covered. If you attended the January meeting you had a chance to hear Harold Smith, K2HC, Rochester Hamfest General Chairman talk about how Hamfests around the country are starting to drop in both attendance and in exhibitors. There are a lot of reasons for this that was covered but the thing is that people don't attend Hamfests if equipment exhibitors are not there and visa versa. He brought up a good suggestion that is worth covering here on how everyone can help turn this around. First, talk up the Hamfest to friends and on the air to get people out. Attend yourself, as it is important that the members of the organization that brings you this great Hamfest support it. The other suggestion he had is for each of us to send e-mails to the vendors and tell them that you are interested in their product and hope that they will be at the Rochester Hamfest so that you can have a better look and possibly make a purchase. If they know that enough people are interested they will be here.

Harold also put out a request for more club members to get involved in making this event happen. He talked about two positions that are required immediately, being advanced ticket sales and chairman of the flea market. More info on this can be found elsewhere in this issue of the *RAG*, so if you have interest now is the time to get involved.

SILENT KEY

Earl W. Holtz, W2WQV
January 7, 2002

David C. Frisch, WA2HPC
December 8, 2001

Chester W. Selbert, WB2ZFS
January 1, 2002

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